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Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
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Item 6 of the provisional agenda*
Implementation of articles 21 and 22 of the Convention

Reports by specialized agencies on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities

Report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Summary

In accordance with article 22 of the Convention, the specialized agencies of the United Nations have been invited to submit to the Committee, at its seventy-second session, reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities.

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I. Introduction

1. At its seventy-second session, the Committee will examine the periodic reports of Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Botswana, Bulgaria,[1] Colombia, Ethiopia, Serbia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

2. As a specialized agency of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) contributes to the building of peace, the alleviation of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture and communication and information. In accordance with the medium-term strategy for the period 2014–2021, gender equality was designated as one of two global priorities for UNESCO and continues to be a global priority for the period 2014–2021. The priority is being pursued through a two-pronged approach: gender-specific programming and the mainstreaming of gender equality perspectives into all fields of competence of UNESCO.

3. UNESCO has a major role and responsibility within the United Nations system in implementing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. In accordance with Article 10 of the Convention, States parties are to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure that their rights are equal to those of men in the field of education. The right to education lies at the heart of the mission of UNESCO and is an integral part of its constitutional mandate.

4. Efforts by UNESCO to promote the empowerment of women, women's rights and gender equality are guided by its medium-term strategy, its biennial and quadrennial programme and budget documents, its organization-wide action plan on the gender equality priority for the period 2014–2021, which supports and guides the implementation of its global gender equality priority, the Convention, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and resolutions and international and regional instruments relevant to the areas of action of UNESCO.

5. The commitment of UNESCO to pursuing its gender equality priority is facilitated by the Division for Gender Equality in the Office of the Director-General. As the UNESCO focal point for gender equality, the Division provides policy guidance and recommendations to senior management and the programme sectors for mainstreaming gender equality considerations into UNESCO policies, strategies and programmes; carries out capacity-building; monitors gender parity and work-life balance within the secretariat; and develops and establishes partnerships with other United Nations bodies, regional bodies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, private foundations and private sector partners that support initiatives for the empowerment of women and gender equality.

II. Measures taken by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to implement the provisions of the Convention in the countries whose reports are to be considered at the seventy-second session of the Committee

A. Angola

6. Angola is not a party to the Convention against Discrimination in Education of 1960. The country did not respond to the ninth consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention.

[1] The consideration of the report of Bulgaria was postponed subsequent to the preparation of the present report.

7. Article 21, paragraph (h), of the Constitution of Angola stipulates that one of the fundamental tasks of the State of Angola is to promote equal rights and opportunities between Angolans, regardless of origin, race, political affiliation, sex, colour, age or any other characteristic used as a basis for discrimination. Moreover, in accordance with paragraph (i) of the same article, another principal task of the State is to make large-scale and permanent investments in education, health and the economy in order to foster the full development of children and youth. Furthermore, article 23 states that everyone is equal before the Constitution and the law. No person may be discriminated against, privileged or deprived of any right or exempted from any duty on the basis of ancestry, sex, race, ethnicity, colour, disability, language, place of birth, religion, political conviction, ideology or philosophical belief, level of education or economic, social or professional situation.

8. Article 35, paragraph (3), states that men and women are equal within the family, in society and before the State and, therefore, enjoy the same rights and are responsible for the same duties. Paragraph 6 of the same article states that it is a priority for families, the State and society to protect the rights of children, including the right to a full and harmonious education and to proper living, health and learning conditions.

9. The right to education is guaranteed under article 79. The State is required to promote access for all to literacy, education, culture and sports and to encourage private agents to become involved in the implementation of related activities, in accordance with the law. The State must promote science and scientific and technological research. Private and joint initiatives in the fields of education, culture and sports must be conducted under the terms prescribed by law. Article 80 states that every child has the right to receive special attention from family, society and the State, which must coordinate in order to ensure wide protection against all forms of abandonment, discrimination, oppression, exploitation and abuse of authority by family members or institutions. With regard to young people, under article 81, they are to receive special protection, in particular in the fields of education, vocational training and culture, to ensure that they can effectively enjoy their economic, social and cultural rights.

10. The Angolan formal education structure is based on a 1-6-3-3 format. There is one year of pre-primary school, which has an official entry age of 5. Primary school has an official entry age of 6 and comprises six grades. It is compulsory and free of charge. Upon completion of the primary education cycle, students receive a certificate of completion. Secondary school is divided into two cycles: lower secondary and upper secondary. Lower secondary school consists of grades 7 to 9 and culminates in a certificate of completion of the lower secondary cycle; upper secondary school consists of grades 10 to 12 and culminates in a diploma of completed secondary education. In addition, Angola has a lower secondary vocational education track that lasts three years and two upper secondary vocational education tracks that each last four years. Higher education is offered at universities, technical schools and academies. The higher education structure consists of four levels: a bachelor's degree, which takes three years to complete; a licentiate, which takes four to six years to complete; a master's degree, which involves an additional two years after the completion of a licentiate; and a doctorate, which takes four to six years after the completion of a master's degree.

B. Antigua and Barbuda

11. Antigua and Barbuda is not a party to the Convention against Discrimination in Education. The country did not respond to the ninth consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention.

12. Protection against discrimination on the grounds of race, sex or any other characteristic is guaranteed under section 14 of the Constitution of Antigua and Barbuda. It states that no law may make any provision that is discriminatory either in itself or in its effect and that no person is to be treated in a discriminatory manner by any person acting by virtue of any law or in the performance of the functions of any public office or any public authority.

13. The education system in Antigua and Barbuda is influenced by the British system. It is compulsory for children to attend school between the ages of 5 and 16. There are both public and private schools, and education can begin as early as 3 years of age, in kindergartens. A child can attend primary school from the age of 5 or 6 until the age of 12, then attend secondary school for a further four or five years. Entrance into the secondary system requires successful completion of the common entrance examinations. The State provides a full five-year programme of secondary education, during which time students become equipped to take either the ordinary level exams, used to prepare students for college and university level courses, or the advanced level exams, which give them access to the University of the West Indies or a foreign university. The country has three colleges, namely, the University of Health Sciences Antigua, the University of the West Indies, which also has branches in other parts of the Caribbean region, and the Antigua State College, which provides technical and teacher training. Students who wish to obtain degrees that are not available in the country opt to attend universities in Europe or North America.

C. Botswana

14. Botswana is not a party to the Convention against Discrimination in Education. The country did not respond to the ninth consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention.

15. Protection against discrimination is guaranteed under section 15 of the Constitution of Botswana. It states that no law may make any provision that is discriminatory either in itself or in its effect and that no person is to be treated in a discriminatory manner by any person acting by virtue of any written law or in the performance of the functions of any public office or any public authority. In the section, the term "discriminatory" is defined as applying different treatment to different persons, attributable wholly or mainly to their respective descriptions of race, tribe, place of origin, political opinion, colour, creed or sex.

16. The national policy on education, launched in 1977, endorses the philosophy of "education for kagisano", meaning "education for social harmony". According to the policy, after completing seven years of primary school, pupils are expected to have developed an awareness of their rights and responsibilities related to health, gender, law, violence, identity and civic and other social and moral issues. Moreover, the senior secondary school curriculum is designed to be gender-sensitive and to positively address existing biases to help all learners to fully develop their potential.

17. The Botswana formal education structure is based on a 3-7-3-2 format. There are three years of pre-primary school, which has an official entry age of 3. Primary school has an official entry age of 6 and comprises seven grades. At the end of the cycle, students sit the Primary School Leaving Examination. Secondary school is divided into two cycles: lower secondary and upper secondary. Lower secondary school, known as junior secondary, consists of grades 8 through 10 and culminates in the Junior Certificate. Upper secondary, known as senior secondary, consists of grades 11 and 12 and culminates in the Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education or the International General Certificate of Secondary Education, which allow students to obtain access to tertiary and higher education. In addition, Botswana has multiple upper

secondary vocational education tracks that last one to three years. Higher education is offered at the University of Botswana through a broad range of academic programmes, mostly at the undergraduate level. Professional and career studies leading to a certificate normally last one year. Programmes leading to a diploma take two or three years. A bachelor's degree normally takes four years, or five years in the cases of law and engineering. The University also offers master's and doctoral degrees.

18. The UNESCO and Mosadi Khumo information and communications technology (ICT) empowerment project was implemented by the non-governmental organization, Mosadi Khumo Socio-Economic Empowerment Forum for Women. The goal of the project was to enhance the capacity of women to actively engage in efforts to change both their socioeconomic conditions and the wider development policy context in which they operated and to use ICT to access information that would help them to invest, grow their businesses and increase their income and wealth, as well as to use such technology to create jobs and alleviate poverty.

19. The UNESCO project on supporting comprehensive education sector responses to HIV and sexuality education leading to zero HIV infections in Botswana is aimed at: (a) strengthening the response of teacher training institutions to HIV and AIDS through the provision of sexuality and reproductive health education; (b) supporting comprehensive education sector responses to HIV and sexuality education in Botswana; (c) advocating the integration of the national life skills framework into the school curriculum at the pre-primary through tertiary levels, with emphasis on integration into pre-service teacher training; and (d) advancing gender equality and protecting human rights efforts to reduce the vulnerability of young people to all forms of gender-based violence in and around schools.

D. Bulgaria

20. Bulgaria has been a party to the Convention against Discrimination in Education since 4 December 1962. The country responded to the ninth consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention.

21. With regard to the education of immigrants and refugees, Bulgaria has adopted key measures to ensure their inclusion in its education system and to provide them with educational opportunities, including the provision of language classes to newcomers. In order to successfully integrate children from such families, the host school takes into consideration the differences between the education system of the child's country of origin and the education system of Bulgaria and provides additional support in general subjects.

22. Bulgaria provides financial support to children with special needs in order to ensure their access to education and has established a system to identify the needs and individual characteristics of such students through, for example, data collection, consultations or monitoring. With regard to students with hearing impairments, Bulgaria has taken steps to improve access to information and communication for such students by providing funding for research on Bulgarian sign language, with a view to increasing its use as a natural language. Training has also been given on the use and promotion of sign language in Bulgarian society.

23. With regard to pupils from poor households, Bulgaria provides free textbooks or school materials to each pupil to help to alleviate the social burden on children of poor families and to promote school attendance. Bulgaria took a step further by loaning textbooks free of charge to those not attending school. The report submitted by Bulgaria contains an interesting measure to enhance the inclusion of disadvantaged students: the gradual introduction of a full day of school. The measure was implemented during the 2010/11 school term through that of 2015/16 and concerned

pupils from grades 1 through 6. Under the approach, compulsory classes were combined with forms of self-study, activities of interest to the pupil and organized recreation. The measure ensured that all students, including those from vulnerable groups, benefited from various development opportunities and conditions that were better suited to a school setting.

24. With regard to minority groups, Bulgaria has adopted a national strategy and action plan for the integration of Roma people and other members of ethnic minority groups for 2012–2020. In addition to promoting their full integration, the measures involve working with parents among such groups to emphasize the benefits of attending school, as well as working with parents of schoolchildren to build positive attitudes towards the Roma community.

25. There have also been some recent legislative and policy developments to ensure that access to pre-primary education is largely expanded and that such education is free and mandatory, as recommended by the Education 2030 Framework for Action. Bulgaria also provides free secondary education. To address the financial barriers to higher education, Bulgaria offers financial assistance, including grants and subsidies.

26. Religion is taught in various compulsory and elective courses, and the curricula include concepts relating to Christianity and Islam. With regard to the rights of national minority groups to study in their mother tongue, according to the National Education Act of 1991, pupils whose mother tongue is not Bulgarian have the right to study, alongside the compulsory study of the Bulgarian language, their own mother tongue in municipal schools, that is, either in mainstream schools or in schools for such children, under the protection and control of the State. Furthermore, school curricula have been adapted to meet other needs of national minority groups.

27. Article 6 of the Constitution of Bulgaria states that all persons are born free and equal in dignity and rights, that all citizens are equal before the law and that there must be no privileges or restrictions of rights on the grounds of race, national or social origin, ethnic identity, sex, religion, education, opinion, political affiliation, personal or social status or property status.

28. Article 23 of the Constitution sets forth the duty of the State to establish conditions conducive to the free development of science, education and the arts, to provide assistance to that effect and to organize the conservation of all national historical and cultural monuments. Article 53 states that everyone has the right to education. It also stipulates that school attendance up to the age of 16 is compulsory; primary and secondary education in State and municipal schools is free; in certain circumstances established by law, higher education establishments must also provide education free of charge; and such establishments enjoy academic autonomy. Furthermore, citizens and organizations are free to found schools in accordance with the conditions and procedures established by law. The education they provide must comply with the requirements of the State. The State must promote education by opening and financing schools, supporting capable students at the primary, secondary and university levels and providing opportunities for occupational training and retraining.

29. In accordance with article 4, paragraph 2, of the National Education Act (as amended) restrictions or privileges based on race, nationality, sex, ethnic and social origin, religion and social status are not to be tolerated.

30. Basic education in Bulgaria comprises two stages: primary education (grades 1 to 4) and lower secondary education (grades 5 to 8). The normal age of entry is 6 or 7. Successful pupils receive a certificate at the end of grade 4 (completion of primary education) and grade 8 (completion of basic education). Vocational or technical education courses can be attended upon completion of grades 6, 7 or 8. Secondary education covers grades 9 through 12 and is provided through: specialized secondary

schools (known as gymnasiums) offering four-year programmes oriented towards the natural sciences and mathematics, humanities, sports and other fields and to which students are admitted after grade 8; specialized secondary schools offering five-year programmes focused on intensive foreign language instruction, with admission after grade 7; and general secondary schools (grades 9 through 11 or 12).

31. Secondary vocational education is provided through: technical schools offering four-year programmes and with admission after grade 8; technical schools offering five-year programmes focused on foreign language instruction and with admission after grade 7; and vocational schools offering three-year programmes and with admission after grade 8. Upon successful completion of the final year of secondary education, students receive a certificate. Students passing the State matriculation examinations receive a diploma, which gives them access to higher education. Higher education is organized as follows: (a) non-university education in colleges and institutes offering three-year programmes leading to a diploma in a specialized field; (b) universities offering four- to five-year programmes leading to a bachelor's degree and an additional one to two years of study for a master's degree; (c) universities offering five- to six-year programmes; and (d) postgraduate programmes leading to a doctoral degree, which last three years on a full-time basis or a minimum of four years on a part-time basis.

32. The UNESCO project on women in the history of academic science in Bulgaria is aimed at establishing a new encyclopedic, interdisciplinary reference book and database on the role and place of women in the history of Bulgarian academic science. The overall goal of the project is to raise awareness of the professional activities of women in academia and the various branches of science in Bulgaria. The book and database include information about the academic careers of women and their career paths. The project will create opportunities to draw conclusions in support of gender equality in science. The reference book is being compiled using, among others: autobiographical and biographical documents, documents from official and staff records, the scientists' personal records and various collections and personal archives. The project has the following specific objectives: (a) to study the role of women and their contributions to science from the end of the nineteenth century to 2015; (b) to enrich the body of literature about women in science by including sets of documents on various topics and from different sources; (c) to identify the women who have made the most significant contributions to the development of academic science; (d) to reflect on the management and decision-making positions held by women in institutes, scientific units and scientific associations, as well as other leadership positions; (e) to restore and preserve the documentary heritage on the subject, kept at the scientific archive of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences; and (f) to create an electronic database, from which will be built a thematic microwebsite presenting information related to the project, with an option for full-text search and a virtual presentation of selected documents. The innovative nature of the project and its methodology is based on a new research model, which may be applied by other scientific teams.

E. Colombia

33. Colombia is not a party to the Convention against Discrimination in Education. However, the country did respond to the ninth consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention.

34. Under article 5 of the Constitution of Colombia, the State recognizes, without any discrimination, the primacy of the inalienable rights of the individual and protects the family as the basic institution of society. Article 13 states that all individuals are born free and equal before the law, are to receive equal protection and treatment from authorities and are to enjoy the same rights, freedoms and opportunities without any

discrimination on the basis of sex, race, national or family origin, language, religion, political opinion or ideology. The State must promote the conditions for real and effective equality and must adopt measures in favour of groups that are discriminated against or marginalized. The State must protect, in particular, those individuals who, on account of their economic, physical or mental condition, are in vulnerable situations and must sanction the abuse or mistreatment perpetrated against them. The third paragraph under article 42 states that family relations are based on the equal rights and duties of the couple and on mutual respect among all family members. Any form of domestic violence is considered damaging to the harmony and unity of the family and will be sanctioned according to law.

35. Article 67 states that education is an individual right and a public service with a social function. Through education, individuals seek access to knowledge, science, technology and other cultural assets and values. Colombians are to learn about respect for human rights, peace and democracy and about using work and recreation to make cultural, scientific and technological improvements and to protect the environment. The State, society and the family are responsible for education, which is mandatory for children between the ages of 5 and 15 and includes at least one year of preschool and nine years of basic education. Education is provided free of charge in State institutions, without prejudice to the charging of school fees to those who can afford them. The State is ultimately responsible for regulating and conducting inspections and monitoring the education system to ensure that it is of high quality and that it fulfils its purpose and to ensure the best moral, intellectual and physical instruction for students. It is also up to the State to guarantee an adequate supply of educational services and to guarantee the conditions necessary for minors to have access to and remain in the education system. The nation and local entities to participate in the management, financing and administration of State educational services within the limits defined in the Constitution and by law.

36. Under article 68, private individuals may found educational institutions, and the law establishes the conditions for the creation and management of such institutions. The educational community is to participate in the management of educational institutions. Education is to be provided by individuals of recognized ethical and pedagogical aptitude. The professionalization and dignity of the teaching profession are guaranteed under the law. Parents have the right to select the type of education for their children who are underage. In State institutions, no individual may be obliged to receive religious instruction. Members of ethnic groups have the right to an education that respects and develops their cultural identity. The eradication of illiteracy and the education of individuals with physical or mental disabilities or with exceptional capabilities are special obligations of the State.

37. The autonomy of universities is guaranteed under article 69. Universities administer and govern themselves through their own by-laws, in accordance with the law. A special regime for State universities is established under the law. The State has the duty to strengthen scientific research in public and private universities and to ensure the conditions necessary for its development. The State supports financial arrangements giving qualified individuals access to higher education. Article 70 establishes the obligation of the State to promote and foster equal access to culture for all Colombians, through the provision of lifelong education and scientific, technical, artistic and professional instruction at all stages of the process of building a national identity. The State recognizes the equality and dignity of all those who live in the country. The State has the duty to promote research, science, development and the dissemination of the nation's cultural values.

38. Primary education in Colombia is compulsory for all children 6 to 14 years of age and takes nine years to complete. It is split into two phases: basic primary education, which takes five years to complete, and basic secondary education, which

takes four years. Secondary education takes two years to complete and prepares students for university-level education. Secondary education is divided into two tracks: academic, providing basic instruction in the arts, sciences or humanities, and technical or vocational, offering specialization in agriculture, industry, commerce and finance. Higher education is provided through universities offering programmes up to the doctorate level; university or technological institutes offering undergraduate programmes and, in some cases, postgraduate courses; technological institutions providing higher professional education and upper secondary vocational education programmes; and technical training institutes offering upper secondary vocational education programmes.

39. The overall goal of the UNESCO project on rebuilding social tissue through sport as a pedagogical tool was to reinforce the process of socioeducational management in two municipalities in Córdoba, using sport as an educational tool and for experiential learning, in order to raise awareness of and tackle the vulnerability of girls and adolescents in situations of violence. In order to achieve that goal, monthly practical workshops were organized with parents, teachers, partners and volunteers on sexual and reproductive health, the rights of the child, preventing violence against women and other issues. The project also included training for trainers, as well as three-month seminars for girls and adolescents on sports, leadership, self-care and teamwork.

40. The goal of the project to organize an international meeting of traditional midwifes is to build the capacities of midwifes and students of midwifery from rural and urban municipalities of the departments of Valle del Cauca, Choco and Nariño, as well as of experts from the Ministry of Culture and community members in traditional African midwifery, and to thereby contribute to the safeguarding of knowledge associated with African midwifery in the city of Buenaventura. The project also involves the creation of spaces for dialogue, for the exchange of best practices, for training and for consultations with traditional midwifes and midwifery students, and will be conducted in Buenaventura, on the Pacific coast of Colombia, where a significant number of traditional midwives live, with a view to promoting high-quality health education and HIV education and comprehensive sexuality education.

F. Ethiopia

41. Ethiopia is not a party to the Convention against Discrimination in Education. The country did not respond to the ninth consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention.

42. Article 25 of the Constitution of Ethiopia states that all persons are equal before the law and are entitled, without any discrimination, to the equal protection of the law. In that respect, in accordance with the law, all persons are guaranteed equal and effective protection without discrimination on the grounds of race, nation, nationality or other social origin, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion or property, birth or other status.

43. The rights of women are guaranteed under article 35, which states that women have equal rights with men to enjoy the rights and protections provided for under the Constitution. It also states that the historical legacy of inequality and discrimination suffered by women in Ethiopia must be taken into account and, in order to remedy that legacy, women are entitled to affirmative measures. The purpose of such measures is to pay special attention to women so as to enable them to compete and participate on an equal basis with men in political, social and economic life, as well as in public and private institutions. The State must enforce the right of women to eliminate the influences of harmful customs. Laws, customs and practices that oppress or cause bodily or mental harm to women are prohibited. Women have the right to

maternity leave with full pay. The duration of maternity leave is determined by law, taking into account the nature of the work, the health of the mother and the well-being of the child and family. Maternity leave may, in accordance with the law, include prenatal leave with full pay. Women have the right to full consultation with regard to the formulation of national development policies and the designing and execution of projects, in particular, projects affecting the interests of women. Women have the right to acquire, administer, control, use and transfer property. In particular, they have equal rights with men with respect to the use, transfer, administration and control of land. They also enjoy equal treatment regarding the inheritance of property. Women have the right to equal treatment with regard to employment, promotion, pay and the transfer of pension entitlements. To prevent harm arising from pregnancy and childbirth and in order to safeguard their health, women have the right to access to family planning education and information and to build capacity in that regard.

44. Paragraph 4 of article 41 establishes the obligation of the State to allocate ever-increasing resources to public health, education and other social services.

45. The education system in Ethiopia includes primary education, which is for children from 7 to 14 years of age and takes eight years to complete. Primary education is divided into two cycles: basic education (grades 1–4) and general education (grades 5–8). In the first cycle, students are expected to achieve functional literacy, while in the second cycle, students are taught the skills necessary for further education. The use of local languages as a means of instruction has been introduced in the first years of primary education. The first cycle of secondary education (grades 9 and 10) is intended to enable students to identify areas of interest for further training. The second cycle (grades 11 and 12) prepares students for higher education or training in a vocation of their choosing. Technical and vocational education and training is institutionally separate from the regular education system and runs in parallel with it. Training is offered at the exit points of the academic system (grades 4, 8 and 10). Higher education institutions include eight universities, thirteen colleges (including teacher-training colleges), three institutes (polytechnic, mass media and water technology) and a number of private institutions (mainly colleges). Teacher-training institutes offer one-year courses that qualify individuals to teach in the first cycle of primary education. Diploma programmes generally last two to three years. First-degree courses leading to a bachelor's degree take four to five years (six years in the case of medicine and veterinary studies). Postgraduate courses require one to three years of study.

46. The UNESCO project on gender equality and the empowerment of women is a joint programme which helps to direct the support of various United Nations agencies to the Government of Ethiopia in its efforts to further improve the lives of Ethiopian women and support the realization of their rights, in line with its international commitments. The project is aligned with the growth and transformation plan of Ethiopia, the country's overarching national development strategy as well as sector-based plans, strategies and policies. The project is grounded in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Ethiopia, jointly agreed upon between the Government of Ethiopia and the United Nations country team in Ethiopia. The specific objectives of the project include: increased participation of girls and women in secondary and tertiary education in targeted areas; increased number of teachers who have the knowledge and skills necessary to apply a gender-responsive method of teaching; and increased number of women and girls obtaining basic functional literacy skills.

47. The main goal of the project entitled "Crowdsourcing girls' education: a community-based approach to lowering dropout rates in secondary schools in Ethiopia" is to improve the quality of life and social well-being of adolescent girls in poor rural communities in Ethiopia and the United Republic of Tanzania. It is built

on the premise that gender-responsive and inclusive education cannot be achieved without the direct involvement of adolescent girls themselves, as well as local communities, including families, community leaders, community-level school inspectors and education officers. Adolescent girls enrolled in lower secondary schools are provided with opportunities to develop leadership skills as part of the project's aim to empower the girls to be their own agents for change through the creation of safe spaces within their schools or communities where the girls have the chance to freely voice and offer solutions to their concerns and needs. In close consultation with teachers, head teachers and local education officers, as well as with the involvement of the girls themselves, the project mobilizes local communities in support of girls' education using community radios as a medium. In that regard, gender-sensitive programmes and public information messages are developed with the adolescent girls as key actors in the development process.

48. The project on retaining girls in lower secondary schools and increasing their learning outcomes in Ethiopia aims to reduce the dropout rate among girls at the lower secondary level (grades 9 and 10) by 20 per cent from the average for the five years prior to the start of the project, in three pilot schools in the Gambela region and three in the Somali region. It also aims to increase their learning achievements by 15 percentage points, as measured according to the general education completion examination of Ethiopia. In addition, the project aims to develop the capacity of teacher trainers and school teachers to use gender-responsive teaching methods, as well as to establish income-generating schemes to assist girls with school materials and related expenses.

49. The project on enhancing ICT skills and open solutions in Ethiopian education systems through the ICT competency framework for teachers and the e-learning tool on women in African history consists of the introduction of the above-mentioned tool into the curricula of schools in Ethiopia and the expansion of its content and its translation into African languages. The objective of the project is to develop and diffuse an Internet platform consisting of multimedia content (comic strips, interactive pedagogical units, audio modules, tests, etc.) to highlight the role of women in African history. As part of the project, a promotional video on the use of the ICT competency framework for teachers and the e-learning tool was produced to raise the visibility of the project, specifically as it relates to the action plan of the gender equality priority and the operational strategy for priority Africa (2014–2021) of UNESCO.

50. The goal of the project on conference and community mobilization on the issues of gender mainstreaming by Ethiopian youth federations is to mobilize, at the national level, all members of Ethiopian youth federations to implement the issue of gender equality as their main future plan. To achieve that goal, training sessions and street shows are organized focusing on issues of gender equality. The specific objectives of the project include: raising awareness among youth of issues regarding gender equality; transferring knowledge and skills from youth leaders to members of youth organizations; and mainstreaming the concepts of gender equality into the day-to-day work of youth activists.

G. Serbia

51. Serbia has been a party to the Convention against Discrimination in Education since 11 September 2001. The country responded to the ninth consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention.

52. With regard to special education, Serbia has designed a curriculum adapted to the individual needs of students, and, in order to improve learning outcomes, has

ensured the provision of adequate materials and the development of technological innovations. With regard to students from poor households, Serbia has devised policies that seek to eliminate certain education-related costs and has been loaning textbooks free of charge to those not attending school. Regarding secondary education, Serbia encourages the enrolment of students belonging to certain groups, in particular, persons with disabilities and persons belonging to ethnic or national minority groups, in higher education. Students in higher education are lodged in dormitories, either free of charge or at discounted prices.

53. Gender equality is guaranteed under article 15 of the Constitution of Serbia. It states that the State must guarantee the equality of women and men and develop policies of equal opportunity. Discrimination is prohibited under article 21, which states that all are equal before the Constitution and the law. Everyone has the right to equal legal protection, without discrimination. All direct or indirect discrimination based on any grounds, in particular, on the basis of race, sex, national or social origin, birth, religion, political or other opinion, property status, culture, language, age or mental or physical disability, is prohibited. Special measures that Serbia may introduce to achieve the full equality of individuals or groups of individuals in a substantially unequal position compared to other citizens are not deemed to be discriminatory.

54. The right to education is guaranteed under article 71. Primary education is mandatory and free, whereas secondary education is free but not compulsory. All citizens have access under equal conditions to higher education. The State must provide free tertiary education to successful and talented students of lower property status, in accordance with the law. The establishment of schools and universities is regulated by law. The autonomy of universities and scientific institutions is guaranteed under article 72. Such establishments are free to decide how to govern themselves and organize their work, in accordance with the law. The freedom of scientific and artistic creativity is guaranteed under article 73. Authors of scientific and artistic works are guaranteed moral and material rights, in accordance with the law. The State has the duty to assist and promote the development of science, culture and art.

55. According to the Law on the Foundations of the Education System (2009), the education system must provide equal access to education to all children, students and adults without any discrimination and segregation on the basis of gender, social, cultural, ethnic, religious or other affiliation, place of residence, economic status, health condition or disability.

56. Education in Serbia is organized into the following levels: preschool education, primary education, secondary education and higher education. Preschool takes six months to complete and constitutes the first preparatory part of compulsory studies. It is offered in kindergartens for children aged 5 or 6. Primary education begins at the age of 6 or 7 and takes eight years. It is split into two levels: the lower grades include grades 1 through 4 and the higher grades include grades 5 through 8.

57. Secondary education generally takes four years to complete. Secondary schools include: gymnasiums, secondary vocational schools and art schools. Gymnasiums provide general and professional education and involve four years of study. Upon successful completion, students are awarded a high school diploma. Secondary vocational education is offered through vocational schools, which provide education in specific fields. Upon successful completion, a vocational qualification is awarded. There are two kinds of professional secondary school courses: four-year courses providing broad education and preparing students for further studies and three-year courses for students who are not eligible for further studies. Higher education comprises two types of studies: academic studies conducted at universities and

applied, profession-oriented studies conducted at vocational colleges. Higher education involves: undergraduate studies leading to a bachelor's degree and undergraduate vocational or applied studies; graduate studies leading to a master's degree and studies leading to a degree in a specialized field; and doctoral degrees.

58. The overall goal of the UNESCO project to provide training for women in information technology is to promote opportunities and options for retraining and learning in the field of ICT for unemployed women from all over Serbia and to give them the opportunity to gain relevant knowledge that will help them to enter the ICT sector and find employment. To achieve that goal, project activities include: preparing online and offline courses, conducting basic online courses for participants, organizing and holding lectures and gatherings in selected cities and conducting a course on JavaScript programming for selected participants. The project addresses the need to integrate employable skills into national education systems so that Governments can build the basis for a stronger society and a more resilient economy through online training and accessible training materials, with a focus on women as the primary beneficiaries.

H. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

59. The United Kingdom has been a party to the Convention against Discrimination in Education since 14 March 1962. However, the country did not respond to the ninth consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention.

60. Discrimination is prohibited under article 14 of the Human Rights Act 1998. It states that the enjoyment of rights and freedoms are to be secured without discrimination on any grounds such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, or property, birth or other status.

61. The right to education is guaranteed under article 2 of the First Protocol to the Human Rights Act 1998. It states that no person is to be denied the right to education and that, in the exercise of any functions which the State assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State is to respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.

62. Under the Equality Act 2010, schools are prohibited from discriminating against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief or sexual orientation in relation to admissions, the way in which schools provide education to pupils, the way in which they provide pupils access to any benefit, facility or service, or by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other harm. Schools and higher education institutions have a statutory duty to promote equality between men and women and between boys and girls and to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment. Schools must prepare and maintain a gender equality scheme, which identifies how the school will fulfil those duties. The scheme must be monitored and assessed, and progress must be reported on annually.

63. Across the United Kingdom, there are five stages of education: early years education, primary education, secondary education, further education and higher education. Education is compulsory for all children between the ages of 5 (4 in Northern Ireland) and 16. Further education is not compulsory and covers non-advanced education, which can be taken at further (including tertiary) education colleges and higher education institutions. Higher education is provided through universities and other higher education institutions and colleges.

64. Early years education is provided in a variety of settings, including State nursery schools, nursery classes and reception classes within primary schools, as well as in settings outside the State sector, such as voluntary preschools and privately run nurseries, or provided by childminders. Primary education covers three age ranges: nursery (under 5), infant (5 to 7 or 8) and junior (up to 11 or 12). The main goals of primary education are to achieve basic literacy and numeracy among all pupils, as well as to establish foundations in science, mathematics and other subjects. Secondary education consists of a combination of different types of schools, reflecting the historical circumstances and the policies adopted by the local authorities. Comprehensive schools generally admit pupils without consideration of ability or aptitude and cater to all children in a neighbourhood; however, in some areas, such schools coexist with other types of schools, for example, grammar schools. At the end of this stage, pupils normally sit a range of external examinations.

65. Further education covers all non-advanced courses taken after the period of compulsory education. It may consist of any level, from basic skills training to higher vocational education. Further education is provided to pupils over the age of 16 and is primarily taught in further education colleges, through work-based learning programmes and in adult and community learning institutions. Further education includes post-16 courses, which are similar to those taught in schools, and subdegree courses, which are similar to those taught in higher education colleges and some universities. Higher education includes undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Undergraduate courses include first degrees (honours and ordinary), first degrees with qualified teacher status, enhanced first degrees, first degrees obtained concurrently with a diploma and intercalated first degrees where first degree students, usually in medicine, dentistry or veterinary medicine, interrupt their studies to complete a one-year course of advanced studies in a related topic. Postgraduate courses usually require a first degree as entry qualification and lead to higher qualifications, including doctoral degrees, master's degrees and postgraduate diplomas and certificates, as well as postgraduate certificates of education and professional qualifications.

Annex

Educational statistics for States parties whose reports are to be considered by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its seventy-second session: gross enrolment ratios and gender parity indices, by education level

		Primary education			*Secondary education*			*Tertiary education*		
		Gross enrolment ratio			*Gross enrolment ratio*			*Gross enrolment ratio*		
Country	*Year*	*Female (percentage)*	*Male (percentage)*	*Gender parity index*	*Female (percentage)*	*Male (percentage)*	*Gender parity index*	*Female (percentage)*	*Male (percentage)*	*Gender parity index*
Angola	2009	93.59256	113.52641	0.82441	19.60049	26.33589	0.74425			
	2010	92.80746	117.62042	0.78904	21.24508	31.91976	0.66558			
	2011	91.23398	146.74233	0.62173	20.68159	32.88766	0.62886	3.35383	9.26088	0.36215
	2012									
	2013							7.89279	10.11323	0.78044
	2014									
	2015	105.17413	121.62511	0.86474				7.41861	9.63642	0.76985
	2016				39.34428	62.01602	0.63442			
	2017									
Antigua and Barbuda	2009	91.6891	95.63362	0.95875	101.69295	102.17977	0.99524	18.10537	8.30158	2.18095
	2010	89.86167	98.14539	0.9156	99.97685	98.753	1.01239	20.91329	8.27088	2.52854
	2011	87.62276	95.17426	0.92066	98.30626	98.91968	0.9938	17.32697	8.96226	1.93332
	2012	85.74345	91.69914	0.93505	104.21126	90.41223	1.15262	29.24994	14.05849	2.08059
	2013									
	2014	84.41111	91.0927	0.92665	94.0253	93.14692	1.00943			
	2015	85.06087	90.15994	0.94344	94.59332	92.65485	1.02092			
	2016									
	2017									
Botswana	2009	107.37629	111.3898	0.96397						
	2010									
	2011									
	2012	108.99917	112.02561	0.97298						
	2013	109.28009	112.97915	0.96726						
	2014	103.51677	107.17725	0.96585				28.5492	22.8966	1.24688

Country	Year	Primary education			Secondary education			Tertiary education		
		Gross enrolment ratio			Gross enrolment ratio			Gross enrolment ratio		
		Female (percentage)	Male (percentage)	Gender parity index	Female (percentage)	Male (percentage)	Gender parity index	Female (percentage)	Male (percentage)	Gender parity index
	2015							32.61146	23.87274	1.36605
	2016							28.29716	19.73646	1.43375
	2017							27.30036	19.50548	1.39962
Bulgaria	2009	109.69629	109.86237	0.99849	87.18442	90.17728	0.96681	62.188	46.75649	1.33004
	2010	108.34743	108.70883	0.99668	88.21218	92.08187	0.95798	66.10411	49.96029	1.32313
	2011	103.68996	104.22484	0.99487	91.41754	95.93079	0.95295	66.98323	51.52378	1.30004
	2012	100.48141	101.35474	0.99138	92.61321	96.57716	0.95896	68.9997	54.11734	1.275
	2013	98.67022	99.56506	0.99101	99.04101	103.67783	0.95528	72.10505	56.7077	1.27152
	2014	98.14267	98.91844	0.99216	102.29033	105.92919	0.96565	75.59459	60.005	1.2598
	2015	96.54867	97.5624	0.98961	100.62274	103.96668	0.96784	79.13904	61.99445	1.27655
	2016	94.32158	95.34568	0.98926	98.28918	101.41789	0.96915	79.28314	63.66212	1.24537
	2017									
Colombia	2009	129.40152	129.95786	0.99572	104.20651	94.4583	1.1032	38.02074	36.16456	1.05133
	2010	123.11449	125.40714	0.98172	106.9163	97.3162	1.09865	41.28762	37.58878	1.0984
	2011	118.34844	122.60303	0.9653	108.43582	99.48814	1.08994	45.58421	41.48725	1.09875
	2012	114.50927	118.53166	0.96606	104.20298	95.66766	1.08922	49.06778	43.45352	1.1292
	2013	114.98088	118.19509	0.97281	104.36613	96.46733	1.08188	53.55956	46.75696	1.14549
	2014	111.74236	115.66822	0.96606	102.60407	95.07079	1.07924	57.14538	49.53525	1.15363
	2015	111.60517	115.44076	0.96677	101.53881	94.78271	1.07128	59.91359	51.5398	1.16247
	2016	112.2221	115.68285	0.97008	101.2444	95.17129	1.06381	63.13714	54.44905	1.15956
	2017	110.67493	114.6039	0.96572	101.28421	96.0019	1.05502	65.02284	55.98553	1.16142
Ethiopia	2009	89.88776	97.03857	0.92631	29.36321	37.51061	0.7828	3.21094	7.25701	0.44246
	2010	88.09416	95.37869	0.92363	31.54788	37.96765	0.83091	4.39935	10.2208	0.43043
	2011	90.54849	98.37002	0.92049	33.75725	38.24295	0.88271	4.70346	10.7583	0.43719
	2012	90.98389	98.04526	0.92798	35.72125	39.55244	0.90314	5.15147	11.07862	0.46499
	2013									
	2014	95.62404	104.1371	0.91825				5.26499	10.93351	0.48155
	2015	97.02761	106.76259	0.90882	34.35563	35.82944	0.95887			
	2016									

Country	Year	Primary education			Secondary education			Tertiary education		
		Gross enrolment ratio			Gross enrolment ratio			Gross enrolment ratio		
		Female (percentage)	Male (percentage)	Gender parity index	Female (percentage)	Male (percentage)	Gender parity index	Female (percentage)	Male (percentage)	Gender parity index
	2017									
Serbia	2009	97.17106	98.17813	0.98974	92.68424	90.34432	1.0259	56.38332	43.61253	1.29282
	2010	95.64695	96.13257	0.99495	92.35557	90.54485	1.02	55.62779	42.84228	1.29843
	2011	101.51213	101.47578	1.00036	94.82212	92.50971	1.025	58.84335	44.68821	1.31675
	2012	100.56836	100.5741	0.99994	95.55919	92.86222	1.02904	61.16691	46.19599	1.32407
	2013	100.94359	100.8501	1.00093	95.72802	93.16688	1.02749	64.54011	48.61013	1.32771
	2014	101.36326	100.91137	1.00448	95.40974	93.34009	1.02217	66.01105	50.50505	1.30702
	2015	101.22541	101.45417	0.99775	97.38095	95.99814	1.0144	66.87789	50.16047	1.33328
	2016	100.46706	100.66978	0.99799	96.88268	95.62299	1.01317	70.86127	53.91465	1.31432
	2017	100.36259	100.26625	1.00096	95.87869	95.13252	1.00784	76.85531	56.72797	1.3548
United Kingdom	2009	104.20816	104.51927	0.99702	100.85519	99.70727	1.01151	67.24758	49.2523	1.36537
	2010	104.45593	105.02563	0.99458	103.2479	102.86276	1.00374	67.88567	50.71597	1.33855
	2011	104.61384	104.7467	0.99873	94.32088	93.59386	1.00777	67.89299	51.20161	1.32599
	2012	106.51136	106.54036	0.99973	91.99889	91.9133	1.00093	68.44495	51.50837	1.32881
	2013	107.22195	107.45605	0.99782	127.35326	121.85415	1.04513	65.82407	49.68649	1.32479
	2014	107.45849	107.65278	0.9982	129.87633	124.85067	1.04025	65.42513	49.4394	1.32334
	2015	101.84881	101.96694	0.99884	127.48668	123.5768	1.03164	65.76176	49.18636	1.33699
	2016	101.33816	101.48591	0.99854	160.48662	144.24922	1.11256	68.5325	50.67816	1.35231
	2017									

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (accessed on 30 November 2018).